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LACE.

Lace consists of two parts—the ground and flower pattern, or “gimp.” The flower, or ornamental pattern, is either made together with the ground, as in Valenciennes or Mechlin, or separately, and then either worked in or sewn on, “applique.”

Some laces are not worked on a ground. The flowers are connected by irregular threads, overcast (with buttonhole stitch), and sometimes worked over with pearl loops (picot) such as the points of Venice and Spain, and most of the guipures.

All lace is terminated by two edges—the pearl or picot, a row of little points at equal distances, and the footing, a narrow lace which serves to keep the ground firm and to sew the lace to any garment.

Lace is divided into point and pillow. The first is made by the needle on a parchment pattern, and termed “needle-point.” Point also means a particular kind of stitch, as “Venice point,” “Brussels point.”

The following is the manner of making pillow lace: The pillow is a round or oval board, stuffed so as to form a cushion, to be placed on the knees of the work-woman. On this pillow a stiff piece of parchment is fixed, in which small holes are pricked to mark the pattern, and through these holes pins are stuck into the cushion. The threads with which the lace is formed are wound up on “bobbins,”—formerly bones, now small pieces of wood about the size of a pencil—having a deep groove round their upper ends, so formed as to reduce the bobbin to a thin neck, a separate bobbin being used for each thread. By the twisting and crossing of these threads the ground of the lace is formed. The pattern or figure called “gimp,” is made by interweaving a thread much thicker than that forming the ground work, according to the design pricked out on the parchment. This had been the method of using the pillow, with slight variations, for three centuries.

The Italians claim the invention of point, or needle-made lace. They probably derived it from the Greeks of the Lower Empire, who took refuge in Italy. Its Byzantine origin is further confirmed by the fact that those places which kept up the closest intercourse with the Greek Empire are the cities where point lace was first made and most flourished.

A modern Italian author asserts that the Italians learned embroidery from the Saracens of Sicily, as the Spaniards acquired the art from the Moors of Seville or Grenada. As proof of his theory he states that the word “to embroider,” both in Italian and Spanish, is derived from the Arabic, and that no similar word exists in any other European language. Evidences of lace fabrication appear in Italy as early as the fifteenth century. Lace appears on garments in pictures of that date.

Lace was made throughout Italy by nuns and for the service of the church. Venice was celebrated for her point, while Genoa produced almost exclusively pillow lace. These places, with the addition of Milan lace, were those best known in the commercial world in the earlier periods. The earliest points soon passed from the stiff Gothic forms into the flowing lines of the Renaissance, and into that fine, patternless guipure called Venice point.

One fine Venice lace, the richest and most complicated of all points, is made on a parchment pattern, with all the outlines in relief formed by means of cottons placed inside to raise them. Sometimes they are in double and triple relief; an infinity of beautiful stitches are introduced into the flowers, which are surrounded by pearls of geometric regularity, the pearls being sometimes in scallops. This is the Rose (raised) Venice point so highly prized and so extensively used for albs, collarettes, berthas, and costly decorations. These Venice points are said to be such fine and wonderful work of the needle that they baffle all description, and are endless in variety. The only relic remaining of Venice point is a coarse, cheap lace offered to travelers by the peasant women.

The term “guipure” is now so variously applied that it is impossible to limit its meaning; the modern Honiton and the Maltese lace are called guipure, as well as the imitations of the latter. The Italians called the old raised points of Venice and Spain, guipures. The finest thread guipures were the produce of Flanders and Italy, although when this term was first applied to thread guipures is uncertain, but silk twisted round thick thread or cord was originally called guipures, and from this the work is said to have derived its name. In early times such lace was made of silk, gold, or silver, with the needle, or on a pillow like other laces, and was very costly.

In early times the Genoese made gold lace. This consisted of pure gold mixed with Spanish “laton,” producing a false gold such as is now used for theatrical purposes. They also made gold and silver lace out of drawn wire, such as has been lately found at Herculaneum.

In the seventh century the Genoa point came into general use throughout Europe. These Genoa points, so highly prized, were all the work of the pillow. Lace manufacture extends along the seacoast of Northern

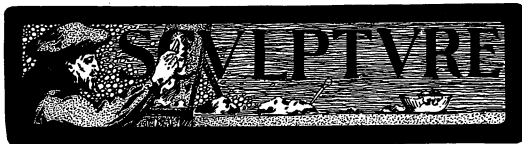
Italy. The workers are mostly the wives and daughters of the coral-fishers, who support themselves by this occupation during the long and perilous voyages of their husbands. In the year 1850 the lace-workers in this part of Italy began to make guipures for France, and these now form their chief produce. The exportation is very great, and lace-making is the daily occupation not only of the women, but of the ladies of the commune.

A further article will describe Malta, Brussels, Mechlin, Valenciennes and Honiton lace. ANTEFIX.



ARCHAIC GREEK HYDRIA.

Die Kunst unserer Zeit (Frans Hanfstaengl) makes again its periodical appearance with the first two numbers of the eleventh year. Both are devoted to a reversion of the personality and work of the German portrait painter, Raffael Schuster-Woldan, who is also successful in figure compositions. The photogravure reproductions show this artist to lean especially to a picturesque posing of his sitters. His manner of brushwork must be peculiarly free, but the features of his figures, except in the portraits, are not wholly satisfactory.



COLOR IN SCULPTURE.

When we look at a classical statue we should pay no attention to the proper color of the material employed, for it is not the method of expression. That which the sculptor has seen in his real or ideal model, that which he puts before our eyes, is pure form. How that form may be presented to us under the various materials of clay, plaster, marble or bronze, matters little to us; we do not need to take it into account any more than we do the color of the paper on which a stamp has been printed. In conformity with that general law which makes everything disappear from our perception except the objective point, we make an abstraction of the color of the statue; knowing what should have no connection with the statue we forbid ourselves to see it, and after some moments of contemplating the work, when we begin to comprehend the formal intentions of the artist, we really do not see it. A singular hallucination, which thus makes the color of an object which we have before our eyes disappear.

I admire that frank and simple proceeding of art. But if a sculptor is thus authorized to simplify his intention is he obliged to do so? Is it forbidden to give objects a representation more complete, more picturesque, and to have recourse to an increase of expression which may furnish him with some discreet indications of color? In fact, it is difficult for us, in the presence of a statue, to forget immediately the characteristic coloration of the object represented. We take pleasure in remembering the contrary. Before the statue of a young woman we think of the actual woman; we tell ourselves that she should be a blonde or a brunette; that what we have before us is not a block of marble, it is She, in the flower of her youth and beauty. To that feminine form, in which the sculptor has contented himself by reproducing the graceful contours, we assist him by giving still more grace in seeing the delicate colors of life; and it is precisely because our imagination thus colors the marble with ideal tints that its hard whiteness does not shock us. Why, then, does the sculptor, making himself an accomplice in that illusion, not try to render it more complete?